

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCA-01 SCCT-01 SCSE-00 CU-04 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 SY-05 L-02 /052 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E:ESHIPPY:SM X20857

APPROVED BY AF/E:WBCOOTE

AF/P:JLINEHAN (SUBS)

SCA:LFORT: (SUBS)

S/CCT:RAFEAREY (SUBS)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL BUKAVU PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:CASC (SMUTS, BARBARA AND KENNETH STEVE SMITH AND
CARRIE HUNTER)

SUBJECT: W/W: THREE KIDNAPPED AMCITS: DEPT MAY 22 NOON
PRESS BRIEFING

FOLLOWING EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE DURING DEPARTMENT'S MAY 22
NOON PRESS BRIEFING:

Q. MAY WE ASK ABOUT TANZANIA NOW? DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING
NEW OR HOPEFUL?

A. FIRST, THE REASON I WAS LATE: I WAS TRYING TO CONFIRM
A WIRE SERVICE REPORT FROM STANFORD UNIVERSITY, WHICH
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REPORTED THAT THE TANZANIAN POLICE HAVE ARRESTED A SUSPECT

AND THAT THERE WAS HOPE THAT THE STUDENTS WILL BE RELEASED. IT QUOTED A STANFORD PROFESSOR DAVID HAMBURG. LET ME JUST SAY THAT I CHECKED WITH OUR BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, AND WE'VE RECEIVED NO CONFIRMATION OR REPORT FROM OUR EMBASSY IN DAR ES SALAAM.

I'M NOT ADDING THAT TO SUGGEST THAT THIS REPORT ISN'T CORRECT. IT'S JUST THAT WE DON'T HAVE ANY CONFIRMATION. BEFORE I SAW THIS REPORT, THE LATEST INFORMATION I HAD IS THAT WE STILL DIDN'T KNOW THE WHEREABOUTS, MOTIVE, NUMBER OR IDENTITY OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- THAT THE TANZANIAN

GOVERNMENT WAS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN TRYING TO LOCATE THEM -- THAT THEY HAD ASKED THE GOVERNMENTS OF ZAIRE, BURUNDI AND ZAMBIA TO COOPERATE. THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF TANZANIA -- FOREIGN MINISTER MALECELA -- HAD EXPRESSED HIS DEEP CONCERN AND REGRETS OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO OUR AMBASSADOR -- AMBASSADOR CARTER; AND AMBASSADOR CARTER HAS INFORMED US THAT HE'S BEEN PERSONALLY IN TOUCH WITH THE KIGOMA REGIONAL COMMISSIONER, THE AREA IN WHICH GOMBE IS LOCATED, TO BE CERTAIN THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE IS BEING DONE.

THE DEPARTMENT HAS INSTRUCTED OUR EMBASSIES IN KINSHASA, ZAIRE, AND BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI, TO APPROACH THE GOVERNMENTS OF ZAIRE AND BURUNDI TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE AND COORDINATION IN THE SEARCH.

AND, FINALLY, THE DEPARTMENT HAS ALSO DIRECTED THAT LEWIS MACFARLANE, THE AMERICAN CONSUL IN ZANZIBAR, AND HAL LUCIUS, THE ECONOMIC OFFICER AT OUR EMBASSY IN DAR ES SALAAM, TO PROCEED TO KIGOMA TO ASSIST IN THE SEARCH. THEY ARRIVED THIS MORNING. BOTH THESE OFFICERS HAVE HAD EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN AFRICA.

Q. BOB, WHAT ARE THEY TO DO?

A. WE DON'T HAVE ANY EMBASSY OFFICERS IN THAT AREA, AND THEY ARE OUT TO ASSIST IN WHATEVER WAY THEY CAN WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES.
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Q. WHERE -- IN KIGOMA?

A. IN KIGOMA. YES, SIR.

Q. BOB, DO WE HAVE ANY WORD AT ALL AS TO WHETHER THESE KIDNAPPERS BELONG TO ANY GUERRILLA FORCE OR SEMI-PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION?

A. NO. THERE'S BEEN SPECULATION IN THE PRESS AS TO THEIR IDENTITY, AND I'VE SEEN THAT. BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION FROM THE TANZANIAN AUTHORITIES AS TO THEIR IDENTITY.

Q. WELL, BOB, ONE OF THE MOTHERS SAID SHE WAS TOLD BY SOMEONE AT THAT BASE, THAT CAMP, THAT THERE WERE 40 MEN INVOLVED, THEY WERE IN UNIFORM, AND ONE OF THEM SAID THEY WERE FROM ZAIRE.

A. I DON'T HAVE CONFIRMATION OF THAT REPORT, JIM. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, WELFARE & WHEREABOUTS, TERRORISTS, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE121422
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ESHIPPY:SM X20857
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750182-0433
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750522/aaaaatfn.tel
Line Count: 126
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUL 2003 by maginmm>; APPROVED <03 FEB 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: W/W: THREE KIDNAPPED AMCITS: DEPT MAY 22 NOON PRESS BRIEFING
TAGS: CASC, PINS, TZ, US, (SMUTS, BARBARA), (SMITH, KENNETH STEVE), (HUNTER, CARRIE)
To: DAR ES SALAAM
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006